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Grassroots Projects Support Safe Aboriginal Communities

Aboriginal communities continue to have an active role in crime reduction and with support from the Alberta government's Safe Communities Innovation Fund (SCIF); they are working to do just that. Seven projects recently announced by the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations will support safer Aboriginal communities by focusing on local solutions to local issues.

At the Ministry's National Aboriginal Day celebration in June, Minister Len Webber announced funding for the Enhancing Safe, Diverse Communities through Cultural Community Groups project. Under a 3-year pilot, the City of Edmonton and REACH Edmonton will work together with local Aboriginal and immigrant agencies to design and deliver crime prevention strategies based on culture. The goal is to create an enhanced support network to help people at-risk make connections to others from similar cultural backgrounds.

Minister Webber joined opening celebrations for the Calgary Stampede Indian Village where he announced funding for three more projects. The Kainai Community Corrections Society is receiving $443,850 to implement the Circle of Courage Youth Intervention Program, a crime-prevention pilot for young members of the Kainai Nation (Blood Tribe).

▲ Minister Webber at opening of Calgary Stampede Indian Village where he announced three new SafeCom projects.

The Legacy Children's Foundation is receiving $150,000 to implement the Stoney Nation Music Factory pilot project. The Foundation will work with local partners to bring musical experiences and mentorship to at-risk Aboriginal youth in the Stoney First Nations communities of Morley, Eden Valley and Big Horn. The Foundation is also receiving $150,000 to implement the Cold Lake Music Factory pilot in Cold Lake and Bonnyville.

Also announced in Calgary was $278,000 in funding to help address the impacts and causes of violent crimes among young people in the First Nation community of Eden Valley. The Eden Valley Youth Empowerment Strategy aims to increase self-esteem by enabling youths to develop skills, complete tasks and have a voice in the community.

Under the Reclaiming Our Youth with Hope project, the Hope Foundation of Alberta is receiving $383,772 over three years to lead a program for Aboriginal students at the Montana School in Hobbema and the Mother Earth Children's Charter School near Stony Plain. Youth will have the opportunity to explore the role of hope in their lives and work with positive role models.

With a $75,000 grant, the Alexander First Nation will work with the Yellowhead Tribal Community Corrections Society and RCMP to conduct a needs assessment on crime reduction.

"Aboriginal communities are taking an active role in crime reduction. We're seeing community-based solutions to community issues," said Minister Webber. "It's great to see so many programs with a youth focus."

Want to learn more?

For more information on the Safe Communities Innovation Fund, visit:

www.safecommunities.gov.ab.ca/scif.

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Protocol Agreement on Government-to-Government Relations

On May 22, 2008, the Premier, the Minister of Aboriginal Relations, and the Grand Chiefs and Vice-Chiefs of Treaties 6, 7, and 8 signed the Protocol Agreement on Government-to-Government Relations (Protocol Agreement). Grand Chiefs and the Premier now meet at least annually and Grand Chiefs and Ministers meet semi annually to discuss issues of mutual concern.

Ministers and Grand Chiefs have met several times since 2008. At their April 12, 2010 meeting, leaders agreed that the Protocol Agreement worked well during its first year and approved the Planning Committee's annual Workplan for Year 2. They also discussed the First Nations Consultation Policy Review, water issues, and First Nation children and youth matters.

Premier Stelmach and Grand Chiefs had their second meeting under the Protocol Agreement on June 14 this year in Edmonton. Len Webber, Minister of Aboriginal Relations, gave an update on the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group and the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Partnership Council. Webber outlined the Partnership Council goals, which include: ensuring students are ready and able to learn; improving teacher training; and engaging parents and families to support children and youth.

▲ From left: Connie Big Plume (Tsuu T'ina Nation); Ryan Robb (Treaty 7 Management Corporation); Leonard Bastien (Piikani Nation); Premier Ed Stelmach; Gregg Smith (Treaty 7); Jason Goodstriker (Treaty 7 Management Corporation)

Also on June 14, Chief Rose Laboucan of Driftpile First Nation presented an update on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on First Nations Education. She observed how the MOU began at the Protocol Agreement table and commended the technicians for their hard work.

Leaders also discussed resource revenue sharing. Chiefs outlined their concerns regarding capacity and resources while Premier Stelmach encouraged First Nations to work with Minister Webber on ways to improve Alberta's overall economic position.

To view the Protocol Agreement, visit: www.aboriginal.alberta.ca/532.cfm

Webber Connects with Aboriginal Communities

An Aboriginal cultural festival in Bonnyville, the Ministry's National Aboriginal Day celebrations and the opening of Calgary Stampede's Indian Village were among the community events attended by Minister Webber this summer.

◀ Minister Webber (second last row, far right in white shirt) joins other special guests at the opening of Calgary Stampede's Indian Village on July 9.

▲ Minister Webber joins MLA Genia Leskiw and performers at the First Nations and Métis Cultural Showcase held June 11 in Bonnyville. During his visit, Minister Webber announced $150,000 in Safe Communities funding for the Cold Lake Music Factory (see Grassroots Projects also in this issue).

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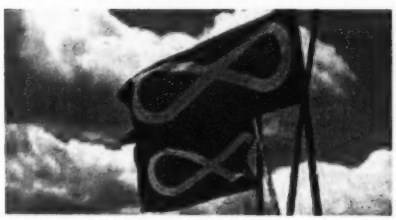


Visit www.aboriginal.alberta.ca/961.cfm for updated information.

◀ Minister Webber and Muriel Stanley Venne, OC, Vice-President of the Métis Nation of Alberta Association at the Ministry's National Aboriginal Day celebrations

Second Meeting of National Aboriginal Leaders and Provincial and Territorial Ministers

▲ **Ministers and National Aboriginal Leaders in Toronto on April 28:**

Front (from left): Len Webber (Alberta), Patty Pottle (Newfoundland and Labrador), Jeanette Corbiere-Laval (Native Women's Association of Canada), Chris Bentley, (Ontario), Shawn A-in-chut Atleo (Assembly of First Nations), Bill Hutchinson (Saskatchewan), Betty Ann Lavallée (Congress of Aboriginal Peoples)

Back row (from left): Clement Chartier (Métis National Council), Brian Skabar (Nova Scotia), Chuck Strahl (Canada), Floyd Roland (Premier of Northwest Territories), Eric Robinson (Manitoba), Pierre Corbeil (Quebec), Jim Lyall (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami)

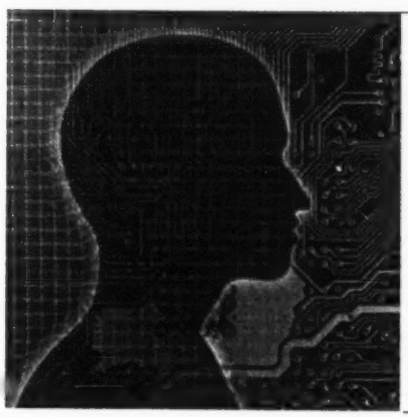
Len Webber, Alberta's Minister of Aboriginal Relations, joined his provincial and territorial colleagues and leaders from five National Aboriginal Organizations in Toronto for a second meeting of the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group (AAWG).

Discussions at the April 28 meeting focused on a coordinated national approach to close the socio-economic gap between First Nations, Mètis and Inuit people and other Canadians. Ministers and Leaders are moving forward on a plan to address the unique challenges and opportunities of First Nation, Mètis and Inuit peoples. The plan focuses on three key goals:

- closing the graduation gap;
- closing the income gap; and
- ending violence against Aboriginal women and girls.

As part of their discussions, the working group also agreed on the importance of collaboration among Aboriginal people, community organizations, the business community and all orders of government.

"Working in close partnership with Aboriginal leaders and communities—especially in Alberta—is vital to addressing these important issues," said Minister Webber.



IGNITE in Fishing Lake

In partnership with IBM Canada, Aboriginal Relations was in Fishing Lake Metis Settlement September 13-16 delivering an IGN.I.T.E (Igniting Interest in Science and Technology) camp to nineteen children in grades 4, 5, and 6. Students spent three fun-filled days doing experiments, working with equipment and exploring first-hand the exciting world of science and technology.

FNEPI Wins National Award

The First Nations Economic Partnerships Initiative, led by Alberta Aboriginal Relations, has been nationally recognized by the Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC).

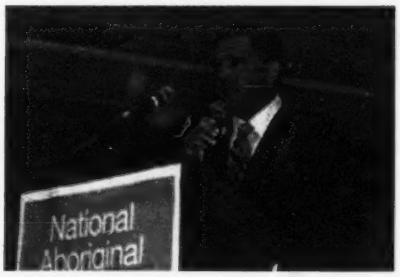
FNEPI was recognized with a Bronze National Award at the 2010 IPAC Innovative Management Awards held August 24 in Ottawa. Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs received Gold recognition for Alberta's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. The two award-winning initiatives are the first of their kind in Canada and set new standards for collaboration among funders, community leaders and service providers.

"The First Nations Economic Partnerships Initiative's unique approach has resulted in more than 100 sustainable partnerships since the program's inception in 2005," said Len Webber, Minister of Aboriginal Relations. "Recognition by IPAC is an honour and allows us to share this partnership model with our public administration peers across Canada."

The innovative program is delivered in partnership with Alberta Employment and Immigration to develop sustainable partnerships between First Nations, industry and government. FNEPI stood out for its innovative delivery model that cuts across bureaucratic boundaries and stakeholder silos to help address and support Aboriginal economic development.

For information on the First Nations Economic Partnerships Initiative, visit www.aboriginal.alberta.ca .

Ministry Celebrates National Aboriginal Day



The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations helped kick-off National Aboriginal Day celebrations across Canada by hosting a noon-hour gathering in downtown Edmonton and announcing a new Safe Communities Innovation Fund pilot project.

On June 16, a crowd of about 400 onlookers was on hand at Edmonton City Centre Mall to watch performances by Aboriginal performers and entertainers. Emcee Adrian LaChance, a traditional dancer and cultural facilitator, led the noon-hour festivities, which included drumming, dance and fiddle music. Aboriginal Relations Minister Len Webber welcomed the crowd and announced funding for a new Safe Communities project in the Edmonton area. Elder Gillman Cardinal offered the opening and closing prayers while Deputy Mayor Ron Hayter brought greetings from the City of Edmonton.

"This cultural showcase is one of many ways the Alberta government recognizes the important role and contribution of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people in the social, cultural and economic life of our province," said Minister Len Webber. "Aboriginal people and communities are vital to Alberta's future prosperity and success, and we are proud to celebrate that fact."

The Alberta Government event in Edmonton joined celebrations across Alberta in recognition of National Aboriginal Day, an annual event officially celebrated on June 21. For more information about National Aboriginal Day, visit www.aboriginal.alberta.ca

To view more photos from the June 16 event, visit: http://www.flickr.com/photos/albertaaboriginalrelations/sets

Lubicon notification policy supports consultation opportunities

Lubicon Lake Nation's current governance situation has created questions for government and industry proponents as to how to best communicate with the First Nation regarding consultation on land management and resource development opportunities.

Although the Government of Alberta has no jurisdiction over Lubicon's governance matters, the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations is responsible for co-ordinating the provincial government's activities on Aboriginal land initiatives related to First Nations consultation.

Acting on behalf of the cross-ministry Aboriginal Consultation Coordination Group, Aboriginal Relations staff visited the Lubicon Band office on August 13, 2010 to formally advise the First Nation that the provincial government will send all future consultation notifications to the Band's office mailing address. This notification process is the recommended approach for all Lubicon project proponents and will also be used by Government of Alberta consultation staff.

The goal is to provide clarity on where and to whom notifications should be sent in order to ensure adequate and meaningful consultation efforts are taking place with the Lubicon Nation. This is an interim policy until Lubicon's governance situation is resolved. It is meant to clarify the notification process in a way that is helpful to Lubicon members, government consultation staff and industry project proponents, without interfering with Lubicon's internal governance situation.

Alberta respects and honours the Lubicon's constitutionally protected rights. Consultation with First Nations, including the Lubicon Lake Band, is in accordance with the Government of Alberta's First Nations Consultation Policy.

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